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Appeals Court Outlaws Random Police Searches in Baltimore

RICHMOND, June 23 (AP) — The 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ordered a lower court today to enjoin Baltimore's police commissioner from conducting searches based on anonymous tips and without probable cause, with or without an arrest warrant.

In reversing the Baltimore Federal District Court's refusal to grant an injunction in the "Venev Raids" case, the Appeals Court said:

"If the police intend to conduct a search of a man's house for a suspect, they must have probable cause to believe that he is on the premises."

In December, 1964, and January, 1965, Baltimore police conducted about 300 searches. They sought two suspected robbers, Samuel and Earl Venev.

"This case reveals a series of the most flagrant invasions of privacy ever to come under scrutiny of the Federal Court," the Appeals Court said.

Appellants in the case, Samuel J. Lankford and others, asked for an injunction to prevent searches without search warrants and based on anonymous tips. The appeal-
 nation also charged discrimination because all the homes searched belonged to Negroes. The Court rejected the discrimination plea.

It did not consider the question of whether search warrants were necessary in the search by police for a person. "While fully appreciating the rights of the policeman . . . the Court must not be deterred from protecting rights secured to all by the Constitution," the Court said.